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# NEMO'S ALMANAC 2004

A literary competition in its 113th year

Good hunting to ye all, my masters.

Edited by Gerard Benson
Price £2

# NEMO'S ALMANAC 2004

**SEND TO GERARD BENSON**
**46 Ashwell Road, Manningham,**
**Bradford BD8 9DU**

## RULES

1. The quotations are to be identified by reference to author, work and, where appropriate, line number or number of chapter, act or scene. Ten marks are given for each answer with full references. Incomplete answers and guesses will receive marks on their merits. Extra marks will be given for answers found only by one or two competitors; also for exceptionally good answers, at the Editor's discretion.
2. The prizes are book tokens of amounts dictated by the modest budget of the Almanac (this year these are £50, £40 and £30). No competitor can take a first prize two years running, or any prize at all in the fourth year, after three years running.
3. Answers are to be typed or legibly written on one side of the paper only, leaving a margin for marks on the right-hand side. Full name and address are to be written on the first page. The coupon above should reach the Editor not later than 1 September 2004. Please mark your envelope "Nemo". If a reasonably sized stamped addressed envelope is enclosed entries will be returned with an answer-sheet.
4. A pseudonym may be used, but prizewinners' names will be published.
5. No author is quoted more than once.
6. The Editor's decision is final in every case.

# *January*

1
I have forgot much, Cynara! gone with the wind,
Flung roses, roses riotously with the throng.

2
What are you telling,
Variable Wind-tone?
What would be teaching,
O sinking, swelling,
Desolate Wind-moan?

3
And filtering winds thin winnowing through the woods
In tremelous noise that bids at every breath
Some sickly cankered leaf
Let go its hold and die

4
Is it the wind that moaneth bleak?
There is not wind enough in the air
To move away the ringlet curl
From the lovely lady's cheek—

5
Vain the ambition of Kings
Who seek by trophies and dead things
To leave a living name behind,
And weave but nets to catch the wind.

6
The seasons change, the winds they shift and veer;
The grace of yesteryear
Is dead; the birds depart, the groves decay:
Empires dissolve and peoples disappear:
Song passes not away.

## *February*

1
My heart is as an anvil unto sorrow,
Which beats upon it like the Cyclops' hammers,
And with the noise turns up my giddy brain.

2
...As to my heart, that may as well be forgotten
or labelled: Owner will dispose of same
to a good home, refs. exchgd., h.&c.,
previous experience desired but not essential
or let on a short lease to suit convenience.

3
O fill this emptiness or else I die.
Now stretch my heart again and now supply;
Now I want space, now grace. To end this smart,
Since my heart holds not thee, hold thou my heart.

4
O green leaves born in winter's heart,
White ghosts of flowers to be,
Come here so quietly,
And blossoming heaven's blue counterpart,
– I have lost my way, and found my heart.

5
And winter's chill is on my heart –
How can I dream of future bliss?
How can my spirit soar away,
Confined by such a chain as this?

6
My Heart the Anvile where my Thoughts doe beate,
My Words the Hammers, fashioning my desire,
My Brest the Forge, including all the heate,
Love is the Fewell, which maintaines the fire.

## *March*

1 The northern blast,
The shatter'd mast,
The syrt, the whirlpool, and the rock,
The breaking spout,
The stars gone out,
The boiling strait, the monster's shock.

2 The vast hulks
Are whirled like chaff upon the waves; the sails
Fly, rent like webs of gossamer; the masts
Are snapped asunder; downward from the decks,
Downward are slung, into the fathomless gulf,
Their cruel engines…

3 Pumping hath tir'd our men, and what's the gaine?
Seas into seas throwne, we suck in againe;
Hearing hath deaf'd our saylers; and if they
Knew how to heare, there's none knowes what to say.

4 A bark from India's coral strand,
Before the raging blast,
Had vailed her topsails to the sand,
And bowed her noble mast.

5 And she beat the bank down with her bows and the ride of her keel:
The breakers rolled on her beam with ruinous shock;
And canvas and compass, the whorl and the wheel
Idle for ever to waft her or wind her with, these she endured.

6 One rich wrack – for Thy hand bes strong!
A barque or a brig from up-along
Bemused by thy twisty tides, O Lard!
For winter in Tops'il Tickle bes hard.

# *April*

1
He leads: we hear our Seaman's call
    In the roll of battles won;
For he is Britain's Admiral
    Till setting ot her sun.

2
Where are the lads that sailed before?
    (Hear what the sea-wind saith)
Their bones are white by many a shore,
    They sleep with Admiral Death.

3
The Captain adventures once more,
Returning a bold Commodore!
And, his wishes to crown, he comes up to town
With an Admiral's flag at the fore.

4
"Them birds goin' fishin' is nothin' but souls o' the drowned,
  Souls o' the drowned an' the kicked as are never no more;
An' that there haughty old albatross cruisin' around,
  Belike he's Admiral Nelson or Admiral Noah."

5
Make the sea shine with gallantry, and all
The ENGLISH youth flock to their Admiral,
The valiant DUKE! whose early deeds abroad,
Such rage in fight, and art in conduct show'd.

6
"Certainly, my home at my uncle's brought me acquainted with a circle of admirals. Of *Rears*, and *Vices*, I saw enough. Now, do not be suspecting me of a pun, I entreat."

# *May*

1
I do not doubt that it may be safely affirmed, that there neither is, nor can be, any essential difference between the language of prose and metrical composition.

2
The old man spoke: 'The poem's seed will never
Be explained, but Keats well knew that true
Art is always wrought with skill and care,
That poets must be slippery and clever:
That's what I think he knew, or think I do.'

3
A poem should be motionless in time
As the moon climbs

4
The writers of *vers libre* rely on their printers to call your attention to what is called 'cadence' or 'rhythmic relation' (not easy to follow) which might have escaped you if printed as prose; *this* sentence, you'll find, has its thumb to its nose.

5
A balanced mixture of clichés, catchwords,
Symbols, non sequiturs, ambiguities,
Stock phrases and borrowings from the best models.
Warranted free from superfluous emotion,
Bad rhymes and obvious plagiarism.
Simply add luke-warm milk and water.

6
Poesy therefore is an art of imitation, for so Aristotle termeth it in his word *Mimesis*, that is to say, a repre--senting, counterfeiting, or figuring forth – to speak metaphorically, a speaking picture; with this end, to teach and delight.

# *June*

1 It were no sport to see the pamper'd worm
Roll out and then draw in his folds of fat,
Like to some Barber's leathern powder-bag
Wherewith he feathers, frosts, or cauliflowers
Spruce Beau, or Lady fair, or Doctor grave.

2

The learn'd themselves we book-worms name,
The blockhead is a slow-worm;
The nymph whose tail is all on flame,
Is aptly term'd a glow-worm.

3

To crawl is not to worship; we have learned
A drill of eyelids, bended neck and knee,
Hanging our prayers on hinges, till we ape
The flexures of the many-jointed worm.

4

"Art thou a Worm? Image of weakness, art thou but a Worm?
I see thee like an infant wrapped in the Lilly's leaf.
Ah! weep not, little voice, thou canst not speak, but thou
canst weep."

5

When worms go to war they dig in, come out and fight, dig in again, come out and fight again, dig in again, and so on. Worms underground never hear the wind overground and sometimes they ask, 'What is this wind we hear of?'

6

Was worm

swaddled in white
Now tiny queen
in sequin coat
peacockbright

# *July*

1 The oranges were more plentiful than usual that year. They glowed in their arbours of burnished green leaf like lanterns, flickering up there among the sunny woods. It was as if they were eager to celebrate our departure from the little island.

2 A faire red Orange in his hand he had,
He gave it me whereof I was right glad,
Takes and kist me, and prayes *God blesse my boy:*
Which I record *with comfort* to this day.

3 How do you pass your time this ugly weather? Gaming and drinking, I suppose: fine diversions for young ladies, truly. I wish you had some of our Seville oranges, and we some of your wine. We have the finest oranges for two-pence apiece, and the basest wine for six shillings a bottle.

4 He hangs in shades the orange bright,
Like golden lamps in a green night.

5 He was a universal favourite, and his ingenuity in little things was transendant. He could cut oranges into such devices as none of us had any idea of. He could make a boat out of anything from a skewer upwards. He could turn cramp-bones into chessmen; fashion Roman chariots from old court cards; make spoked wheels out of cotton reels, and bird-cages of old wire.

6 I don't like oranges,
I don't want nuts,
And I HAVE got a pocket-knife
That almost cuts.

## *August*

1 How falsely is the spaniel drawn!
Did man from him first learn to fawn?
A dog proficient in the trade!
He the chief flatt'rer nature made!
Go, man, the ways of courts discern;
You'll find a spaniel still might learn.

2 He is very imprudent, a dog is. He never makes it his business to inquire whether you are in the right or in the wrong, never bothers as to whether you are going up or down upon life's ladder, never asks whether you are rich or poor, silly or wise, sinner or saint. You are his pal. That is enough for him.

3 A dog might wander the width of the map
to bury its head in its owner's lap,
crawl the last mile to dab a bleeding paw
against its own front door.

4 And if one or two quick tears
Dropped upon his glossy ears,
Or a sigh came double, –
Up he sprang in eager haste,
Fawning, fondling, breathing fast,
In a tender trouble.

5 Vse me but as your spaniell; spurne me, strike me,
Neglect me, lose me; onely giue me leaue
(Vnworthy as I am) to follow you.

6 They wag their tails; they bow the front part of the body and elevate the hind; they roll, they jump, they paw, they whine, they bark, they slobber, they have all sorts of ceremonies and artifices of their own, but the whole thing is of no avail, since speak they cannot.

## *September*

1
The Past is a strange land, most strange.
Wind blows not there, nor does rain fall:
If they do, they cannot hurt at all.
Men of all kinds equal range…

2
The past, a glacier, gripped the mountain wall,
And time was inches, dark was all.
But here it scales the end of the range,
The dialectic's point of change,
Crashes in light and minutes to its fall.

3
The past is a foreign country: they do things differently there.

4
The past's an experience that we cannot share.
Flat-capped Glaswegians and the Music Hall.
Apples and oranges on an open stall.
A day in the country. And the sparkling Clyde
splashing its local sewage at the wall.

5
The Past was goodly once, and yet, when all is said,
The best of it we know is that it's done and dead.

6
The past is such a curious Creature
To look her in the Face
A Transport may receipt us
Or a Disgrace –

## *October*

1 Only a hoot owl
Hollows, a grassblade blown in cupped hands, in the looted elms
And no green cocks or hens
Shout

2
At twilight they come out.
Like floating paper glide along lanes,
noiselessly dipping over hedges,
or fanning their ghostly way
around the houses, down the avenues,
ears and eyes set for the kill.

3
When hazel-nuts wax brown and plump,
And apples rosy-red,
And the owlet hoots from hollow stump,
And the dormouse makes its bed.

4
At eight o'clock, I opened the window to the woods
and an owl about the size of a vicar
tumbled across in a boned gown

5
Make not your rosary of yew-berries,
Nor let the beetle, nor the death-moth be
Your mournful Psyche, nor the downy owl
A partner in your sorrow's mysteries.

6
It calls and calls: all the air swells and heaves
And washes up and down like water.
The ear that listens to the owl believes
In death.

## *November*

1
Give me my old hot-water-bottle,
And you can keep your wives.
Love comes and goes, as well I knows,
But this old pal survives.

2
...M – and I aired it well before it left –, by holding a warming-pan full of red-hot coals in it, and then shutting it up close, smoke and all, until the time when he should get into it at the Rising Sun.

3
How often have I carried our family word
for the hot water bottle
to a strange bed,
as my father would juggle a red-hot half-brick
in an old sock
to his childhood settle.

4
First there was putting hot-water bottles to it,
Then there was seeing what an osteopath could do,
Then trying drugs to coax the thing and woo it,
Then came the time when he knew that he was through.

5
Warming-pans and hot-water bottles are in request; and naughty boys eschew their night-shirts, and go to bed in their socks.

6
Continental people have sex life; the English have hot-water bottles.

## *December*

1 A box to live in, with airs and graces,
A box on wheels that shows its paces,
A box that talks or that makes faces,
And curtains and fences as good as the neighbours'

2 The box is locked, it is dangerous.
I have to live with it overnight
And I can't keep away from it.
There are no windows, so I can't see what is in there.
There is only a little grid, no exit.

3 .... each with pebbles in his hand,
A silenced crowd the café children stand
To see the long box jerking down the bend
Of twisted stair; then set on end,
Quite filling up the narrow door
Till it comes out and does not go in any more.

4 Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,
A box where sweets compacted lie;
My musick shows ye have your closes,
And all must die.

5 Pure, exquisite Box! no corruption can soil it;
There's Otto of Rose, in each breath it unlocks;
While Gr-te is the 'Betty', that serves at the toilet,
And breathes all Arabia around from his Box.

6 The elder men have strode by the box of death
To the wide flag porch, and muttering low send round
The bruit of the day. O friendly waste of breath!
Their hearts are hurt with a deep dynastic wound.

# *Answers to Nemo 2003*

**Cover** : Louis MacNeice *Autumn Journal* xxii

JANUARY
1. Richard le Gallienne "A Ballad of London"
2. Chas Lamb, Letter to Wordsworth, 30 i 1801
3. Wordsworth *Prelude* Bk VII
4. Denise Levertov "Counting Sheep"
5. Philip Larkin "Whitsun Weddings" St 7
6. Dickens *Nicholas Nickleby* Ch 32

FEBRUARY
1. Oliver St John Gogarty "Time, Gentlemen, Time!" v.8
2. Maya Angelou "No Loser, No Weeper"
3. Hardy *Far From the Madding Crowd* Ch 1
4. Edwin Brock "A Moment of Respect"
5. Lord Chesterfield, Letter to his son, 22 ii 1748
6. Langston Hughes "Could Be"

MARCH
1. Conrad Aiken *Prelude I*
2. W E Henley *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*
3. Dylan Thomas "Return Journey"
4. R W Emerson "Blight"
5. Edward Young "Love of Fame, The Universal Passion"
6. Martin Bell "Winter Coming On"

APRIL
1. T S Eliot *Sweeney Agonistes*: Fragment of a Prologue
2. Allen Ginsberg "I Am a Victim of Telephone"
3. Ruth Padel "A Bit of Welcome"
4. Graham Greene *The Human Factor* p 44
5. Dannie Abse "Trailer"
6. John Betjeman "How to Get On in Society"

MAY
1. Eugene Lee-Hamilton "The Death of Puck"
2. R S Thomas "The Minister"
3. P G Wodehouse *The Amazing Hat Mystery*
4. Osbert Sitwell "Winter the Huntsman"
5. Walt Whitman "What Am I After All?"
6. de la Mare "Gone"

JUNE
1. Thomas Carew "On a Damask Rose Sticking Upon a Lady's Breast"
2. Shakespeare, Sonnet 54
3. Swinburne "A Forsaken Garden"
4. Shelley "The Sensitive Plant"
5. Hood "Time of Roses"
6. Charlotte Mew "The Quiet House"

JULY
1. Paul Durcan "Le Poète Allongé"
2. R H Barham "Sir Rupert the Fearless"
3. Wole Soyinka "The Immigrant"
4. Malcolm Lowry *Under the Volcano*
5. Christopher Smart *Jubilate Agno*
6. Roy Fuller "Meredithian Sonnets" 2

AUGUST
1. Norman MacCaig "A True Pleasure"
2. Joyce *Finnegans Wake*
3. Louis de Bernières *Captain Corelli's Mandolin*
4. John Clare "Grasshoppers"
5. Abraham Cowley "The Grasshopper"
6. Blake "Laughing Song"

SEPTEMBER

1. Scott Fitzgerald *Tender is the Night* Ch 1
2. William Plomer "The Axe in the Orchard"
3. Sujata Bhatt "The Stinking Rose"
4. Charlotte Brontë *Jane Eyre* Ch 37
5. Carol Ann Duffy "Warming Her Pearls"
6. Vernon Scannell "The Bombing of the Café de Paris, 1941"

OCTOBER

1. Wilfred Owen "Strange Meeting"
2. William Empson "This Last Pain"
3. Milton *Paradise Lost* 11.258/63
4. Thomas Sackville "The Mirror for Magistrates" 211-15
5. John Berryman "Death Ballad"
6. D J Enright "An Ew Erra"

NOVEMBER

1. Elizabeth Jennings "A Game of Chess"
2. Tennyson Prologue to Becket
3. Nicholas Breton "The Chess Play"
4. E A Poe "The Murders in the Rue Morgue"
5. Kathleen Raine "Card Table"
6. Hazlitt "The Indian Jugglers"

DECEMBER

1. Robert Bloomfield "The Farmer's Boy"
2. Katherine Mansfield letter to Richard Murry, April, 1920
3. Patrick Kavanagh "The Great Hunger"
4. Ted Hughes "Robbing Myself"
5. Pope, *Second Satire of the Second Book of Horace* Imitated (to Mr Bethel)
6. Sellars & Yeatman *1066 and All That*

# *Marks and Prizes 2003*

| | |
|---|---|
| *First Prize (Shared)* | |
| The Christies & the Jarvises | 710 |
| Caroline Heal | 710 |
| *Third Prize* | |
| Nigel Forde | 705 |
| G Ingli James | 700 |
| Angela Turner | 700 |
| Lee Erickson & Ellen Martin | 690 |
| Alan Hollinghurst & Francis Wyndham | 670 |
| D J W Williams | 651 |
| Bernard & Angela Queenan | 644 |
| Gerry Leversha | 632 |
| Roland Hall | 625 |
| Brian Jordan | 625 |
| Richard Gaston | 621 |
| Lucy Grose | 620 |
| Cicely Herbert & Ann Langton | 620 |
| Susan Woodman & Phillip Hearsum | 605 |
| "Davie Dolan" | 600 |
| "Gli Amici" | 599 |
| James Sambrook | 597 |
| D Hawes & E Telesford | 595 |
| Kate Brodie David | 593 |
| Patricia Hodgart | 590 |
| Timothy d'Arch Smith | 590 |
| J A Taylor | 585 |
| S A Osborn & Family | 581 |
| S J Bird | 580 |
| Rosemary Scott & Alison Walker | 580 |
| Mrs A E Sheehan-Hunt | 580 |
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| | |
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## *Remarks*

Congratulations to the winners. It's good to welcome some newcomers to the enclosure. The Wole Soyinka defeated you all. All other quotations were found by at least three competitors. Second in point of difficulty was the Abse. Until the last maildrop only one team had found it, and I was polishing up the bonus points – but the post brought two further right answers.

I enjoy your letters. Thank you. And I admire the way some of you amass sometimes quite modest scores under all kinds of difficulties. Winning is nice of course, but most of you don't do it for that. Indeed there's a whole silent platoon out there who buy the almanac but don't compete. Greetings to you all.

Last year I had considerable difficulties with the post. At least three scripts, slaved over for months, failed to reach me. Deepest commiserations. For the record, here are the 2002 scores of Richard Gaston–633; Henry Villiers–483; and Laurence Inman–304.

I am sad to record the death of William Dales, whose modest attempts always came with an interesting letter. He was 96 and lacked many of the resources which make solving a bit easier.

Which brings me to the Internet again. My ideal solver is someone who brings his (her) knowledge, intuition, sense of style, industry and similar virtues to the quotations and picks them off a few at a time; who reads through volumes of Lovelace and Henley to little avail; who enlists friends (future ex-friends?) relations and neighbours to the search; who is occasionally rewarded with that serendipitous thrill when a book falls open and a quotation jumps out. Many of you still work it that way. But the world has moved on. There are electronic methods of retrieving or discovering information. Since there's nothing I can do about it, I shall do nothing; though, to my mind, getting your first 450 points in two afternoons by clicking a mouse would seem to take the fun, the spirit of adventure out of the thing. How you do Nemo, friends, is your own affair.

But please don't try and enlist me in your squabbles. I am willing to read all kinds of odd text, file my findings, prepare traps, assemble themed pages, get the almanac typed, printed, and proof-read, capitalise the venture, mark a hundred scripts, deal with the marketing and mailing and give part of my house over to storage. In fact I enjoy it. (And I do my research by page-turning.) I am *not* willing to supervise your search methods, adjudicate your disputes or adopt a two- or three-tier marking system. I gather that some of you have managed to shut down an Arts Council quotation website. Next stop the Pentagon?

I was surprised at how many of you didn't twig the theme for July. There was no deception, nothing in my top-hat, nothing up my sleeve. Alcohol, Anchovies and Street lamps, as advertised on the cover.

I apologise for my occasional mistakes (e.g. "When" for "Where" on the cover). However, let me assure those who sue for bonus points by pointing them out, that they are going about it the wrong way. I apologise too for my rare but infuriating arithmetical errors in the marking.

Since I became editor in 1997 I have held the price steady but next year it will have to go up if Nemo is to survive. So for all who order in advance (which is very helpful) Nemo's Almanac 2005 will cost £2.50 (£8.00 for 4). I am grateful for the extras, postage, pourboires, donations, which some of you send.

And now all is said, save, 'Good hunting to ye all, my masters.' (And, of course, mistresses, if you see what I mean.)

# *Notices*


*To Catch an Elephant*
New and Collected Poems for Children
by Gerard Benson,
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The Poetry Business, The Studio, Byram Arcade,
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£6 – (including p + p)


The Editor can offer some remaining back-numbers of the Almanac for sale:

1976 – 2002: 60p each,
any five consecutive: £2.50
while stocks last.

There are also some stocks of 1972 @ 60p each.

Price of *Nemo's Almanac* 2003 inclusive of postage

| | UK | Europe | US 1st Air |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 copy | £2 | £2.20 | $7 |
| 4 copies | £7 | £7.50 | $20 |


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Who forgot much? can you remember?
Whose hearts were anvils? Who'd had enough of Rears and Vices?
Is there a difference between prose and poetry?
What do you call a hot water bottle?
Are dogs obsequious? Art thou a worm?
Is (was) the Past real? What is the wind?

The answers to these and other significant questions may presently be discussed further, as

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